

Level 4 Potential Conservation Area (PCA) Report

Name Farish Recreation Area

Site Code S.USCOHP*7835

IDENTIFIERS

Site ID 561 Site Class PCA
 Site Alias None

Network of Conservation Areas (NCA)

NCA Site ID	NCA Site Code	NCA Site Name
-		No Data

LOCATORS

Nation United States Latitude 385947N
 State Colorado Longitude 1050004W

Quad Code	Quad Name
38105-H1	Woodland Park
38104-H8	Cascade
39104-A8	Palmer Lake

County

El Paso (CO)

Watershed Code	Watershed Name
11020003	Fountain

SITE DESCRIPTION

Minimum Elevation	9,050.00 Feet	2,758.00 Meters
Maximum Elevation	9,440.00 Feet	2,877.00 Meters

Site Description

This site includes much of the Farish Memorial Recreation Area. The landscape is diverse, with the steep rugged topography typical of the Rampart Range. The steep slopes are studded with countless large, rounded granite boulders, giving the slopes a striking lumpy appearance. These uplands support subalpine forests dominated by Engelmann spruce (*Picea engelmannii*) and quaking aspen (*Populus tremuloides*). Among the steep ridges and slopes are mesic meadows, streams, and willow carrs. Several streams have been dammed in the recreation area to create Sapphire Lake, Leo Lake, and Grace Lake. During the summer, afternoon rain showers occur almost daily. West-facing slopes are drier than other slopes. The area is used heavily by elk in the fall and winter. This site contains the only known occurrence of Porter's feathergrass (*Ptilagrostis porteri*) in El Paso County. This species is a Colorado endemic, known currently from only three counties (Park, El Paso, and Summit). The occurrence is located south of Leo Lake in the Farish Memorial Recreation Area. The plants are found in a limited area in deep, peaty soils in a willow carr / sedge meadow peatland. The plants are growing in clumps in a hummocky area, with tufts of the grass growing on top of the hummocks. The dominant species are willows, including planeleaf willow (*Salix planifolia*), shortfruit willow (*S. brachycarpa*), and possibly mountain willow (*S. cf. monticola*). Shrubby cinquefoil (*Pentaphylloides floribunda*) is also common with the Porter's feathergrass. Other associated taxa include sedges (*Carex utriculata*, *C. aquatilis*, *C. simulata*, *C. lanuginosa*), hairgrass (*Deschampsia caespitosa*), Canadian reedgrass (*Calamagrostis canadensis*), foxtail grass (*Alopecurus aequalis*), and rosecrown (*Clementsia rhodantha*). The montane grassland community in the southern portion of the site occupies one of the largest openings in the Rampart Range. The grassland community is Parry's oatgrass (*Danthonia parryi*) with Idaho fescue (*Festuca idahoensis*), fringed sage (*Artemisia frigida*), three-nerved fleabane (*Erigeron subtrinervis*), and hairy aster (*Heterotheca villosa*). A rare dryland sedge (*Carex oreocharis*) occurs within the Parry's oatgrass meadow.

Key Environmental Factors

No Data

Climate Description

No Data

Land Use History

No Data

Cultural Features

No Data

SITE DESIGN

Site Map Y - Yes Mapped Date 06/15/2001

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Designer Anderson, D.G.

Boundary Justification

The boundary encompasses the occurrences and adjacent similar habitat that is not known to be impacted at this time. Open meadows to the north of the Parry's oatgrass montane grassland have been planted with smooth brome and Kentucky bluegrass, while meadows to the south have several roads or trails within them. Both areas have been excluded from the site. The site itself would not include all necessary processes (especially fire) for survival of the montane grassland occurrence, but they could be simulated at a smaller scale. The watershed of the creek that supports the occurrence of Porter's feathergrass was included to ensure the persistence of the proper hydrologic regime for this species.

Primary Area 773.19 Acres 312.90 Hectares

SITE SIGNIFICANCE

Biodiversity Significance Rank B3: High Biodiversity Significance

Biodiversity Significance Comments

This site contains a fair (C-ranked) occurrence of the globally imperiled (G2S2) Porter feathergrass (*Ptilagrostis porteri*), a good (B-ranked) occurrence of the globally vulnerable (G3/S2) sedge, *Carex oreocharis*, and a good (B-ranked) occurrence of the globally vulnerable (G3/S3) *Danthonia parryi* montane grassland.

Other Values Rank No Data

Other Values Comments

No Data

LAND MANAGEMENT ISSUES

Land Use Comments

No Data

Natural Hazard Comments

No Data

Exotics Comments

Canada thistle (*Cirsium arvense*), Musk thistle (*Carduus nutans*) and yellow toadflax (*Linaria vulgaris*) have all been documented within the site during weed surveys performed by CNHP.

Offsite

No Data

Information Needs

No Data

ASSOCIATED ELEMENTS OF BIODIVERSITY

<u>Element</u>			<u>Global Rank</u>	<u>State Rank</u>	<u>Driving Site Rank</u>
<u>State ID</u>	<u>State Scientific Name</u>	<u>State Common Name</u>			
19684	<i>Ptilagrostis porteri</i>	Porter feathergrass	G2	S2	Yes
20528	<i>Carex oreocharis</i>	a sedge	G3	S2	Yes
19228	<i>Danthonia parryi</i> Herbaceous Vegetation	Montane Grasslands	G3	S3	Yes

REFERENCES

<u>Reference ID</u>	<u>Full Citation</u>
-	No Data

ADDITIONAL TOPICS

Additional Topics

No Data

VERSION

Version Date 06/15/2001

Version Author Anderson, D.G.

Disclaimer

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